

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENT

This Amendment cancels Claims 11-12 and 21; and amends Claim 1. Support for the amendments is found in the specification and claims as originally filed. In particular, support for Claim 1 is found in the specification at least at Tables 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10 ("Thickness of Un-melted Silica Powder (mm)" = "2"). No new matter would be introduced by entry of these amendments.

Upon entry of these amendments, Claims 1-10 and 13-20 will be pending in this application. Claim 1 is independent.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Applicants respectfully request entry of the foregoing and reexamination and reconsideration of the application, as amended, in light of the remarks that follow.

Claims 11-12 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,989,021 ("Sato"). Claims 11-12 and 21 are canceled, so the rejection is moot and should be withdrawn.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication that Claims 1-10 and 13-20 are allowed. (Office Action Summary at 5).

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request favorable consideration and prompt allowance of the application.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is necessary in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.
Norman F. Oblon

Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413-2220
(OSMMN 06/04)



Corwin P. Umbach, Ph.D.
Registration No. 40,211